

CPC Backs O'Neil Farm

By MORAG MACLACHLAN

The O'Neil Farm was back on the minds of Community Preservation Committee members during their meeting Thursday morning.

CPC member Pat Loring said she received an invoice for one-third of the cost of a survey needed in order to put a conservation restriction and an agricultural preservation restriction on the farm. The \$12,000 cost of the survey was being split three ways by the town, the Wildlands Trust and the Commonwealth.

Loring asked the board if the CPC would be willing to pay for the town's portion of the survey, a \$4,000 expense. She also questioned whether or not the CPC could help fund two additional costs relating to the O'Neil Farm.

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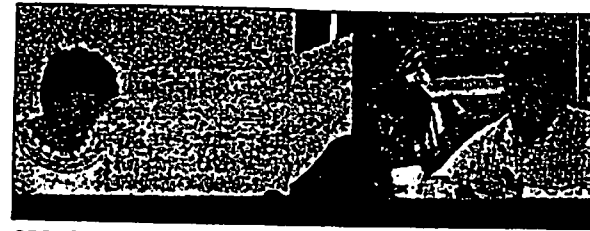
-Pat Loring, CPC member

Loring said town counsel Bob Troy has recommended securing title insurance, which would cost between \$1,000 and 2,000.

The other costs included carving out a trail along the farm for the public. Loring said fencing was needed along the pasture to separate the people from the animals. The fence would be wire with cedar posts. The trail would run one and a half miles.

"It's going to be terrific," Loring said. "It will allow people to really get a sense of the farm and the habitat. We hope to eventually have signage, too."

Loring said she did not know how much materials and installation of the fence would cost. She added that an Eagle Scout had volunteered to work on the brook crossing along the trail. Although Loring was applying for grants for these projects, she said she knew that \$47,000 remained in the O'Neil Farm account and she hoped these



CPC Chairwoman Holly Morris, Tony Kelso and George Wadsworth discuss the O'Neil Farm.

monies could go toward the town portion of the survey, the title insurance and the public access to the farm.

CPC Chairwoman Holly Morris agreed that there still were funds in the O'Neil Farm account. CPC member George Wadsworth said he agreed with having the CPC pick up the tab for the survey and the title insurance, but not costs associated with securing the public access.

"I see these as ongoing

town meeting warrant articles on Feb. 16 at 8 a.m. in the Mural Room of Town Hall.

• Nancy Bennett agreed to speak about the Alden House window repairs. Kelso said he would talk about the Island Creek Fish Ladder. Wadsworth volunteered to speak about the housing consultant proposal. Morris will address all the other articles. The group plans to go before the board of selectmen on Feb. 6.

• Wadsworth said the Delano subdivision project has been scheduled with the planning board. Abutters have been notified.

• Grady said he and other members of the Island Creek Fish Ladder project were trying to secure three grants worth \$155,000. The project would also go out for bids again.

• Bennett said the historical commission met about the Tarkiln Community Center. Two subcommittees were formed to discuss the center's purpose with current users and to explore the administrative side of the project. The historical commission will meet on Wednesday, Jan. 25 at 7 p.m. with Lynn Spencer from the architecture and preservation company Menders, Torrey and Spencer, Inc., based in Boston.

• Bennett said that local contractor John Baldwin had offered to help out with the renovations at the Bluefish River Firehouse.

• CPC members ended their meeting and went on a site tour of the Wright Building.

maintenance costs," Wadsworth said. "Didn't they raise money as part of an endowment? I did not see the project being anything more than a one-time expense."

CPC member Tony Kelso disagreed.

"If taxpayers can access the farm, then we should use the money they already voted on to build the fence," Kelso said. "I think it's a legitimate expense to have it come out of this fund."

Loring said she and conservation administrator Joe Grady would contact Troy for further details about the title insurance. She said the committee could hold off voting on whether or not to fund the public access expenses until after she heard about the grants she had applied for. The committee did vote unanimously to fund the town's \$4,000 portion of the survey.

In other CPC news:

• The CPC will hold a public forum to address its